4:Latcham F-5 (1888-1893) 1909 SG4 Araucanians SG4

Magic and Witchcraft.—As is natural in a race so imbued with superstition and fetish worship, the black art holds a high place in their imagination. Everything not immediately explicable by a natural and visible agency is put down either to evil spirits or to witchcraft. Their thaumaturgy included three class of theurgists; the *kamcungo* or sorcerer, the *dungun* or diviner, and the *machi*, witch-doctor or exorcist. This last vocation is common to the two sexes, and has gradually absorbed the other two classes.

The sorcerers were formerly the sacerdotal class, inasmuch as whatever rites, ceremonies, sacrifices or other religious observations took place were performed by them. They were women's dress and their hair long and unbraided; dwelt in caves in remote mountainous regions, and were supposed to be in communication with the *kamcungo* (hence their name) over which their acts gave them certain powers, compelling them to work their wills. These beings were held in fear and awe by the people, who attributed to them many of the ills that befell them. They were considered the arbiters of national or tribal welfare, and were consulted on all momentous questions. War was never declared, nor peace offered, except in accordance with their advice.

All those who sought their counsel, took with them considerable presents in payment for their advice or help.

Contrary to the practice of the *dungun* and *machis*, their incantations and spells were secret and mystic, wrought in the darkness of their caves, and hidden from the eyes of ordinary mortals, although some of their charms were done visibly, such as seeing visions in a bowl of water, and blowing smoke from their mouths in the direction of the dwellings of their enemies. This smoke was regarded as the familiar spirit of the sorcerer, and the direction it took indicated the path the spirit followed. To enter this caste a long apprenticeship was necessary, terminating in a mysterious initiation ceremony.

The caves where these sorcerers dwell are supposed to be guarded by horrible monsters and evil spirits.

After the *kamcungo* come the diviners or *dungun*, who are sometimes the acolytes or apprentices of the former, though not generally so.

The *dungun* exercise a considerable influence in Indian society, as they are consulted on all doubtful points of social or domestic intercourse, and every-day events. It is they who indicate the author of a robbery, the whereabouts of a missing animal or mislaid object, the probable result of a given enterprise, the perpetrator of any evil happening to the flocks and herds. Their services are paid for in goods. Occasionally also, they are consulted respecting the cause of some mysterious death, but this is generally an attribution of the *machis* or exorcists. Ventriloquism is used by *kamcungo*, *dungun* and *machis* alike. The *dungun* perform their divinations outside their huts, their familiar spirit answering them from within.

By far the most popular and most consulted of these personalities is the *machi*, who combines in his person the offices of medicine-man, seer, and exorcist.